

The key to a healthy vegetarian diet

- **Eat a wide variety of low fat, high fiber foods every day** – whole grain products and many different fruits, vegetables and legumes (beans and peas).
- **Eat the necessary amount of servings from each food group** – plan ahead. (See daily food chart.) Pack food to take with you like fruit, popcorn, bagels with peanut butter, pretzels, dried fruit.
- **Keep sweets and high fat foods to a minimum** – salad dressings, mayonnaise, cooking oils, chips, fried foods, some desserts. Do not substitute more of these foods because you are not eating red meat.

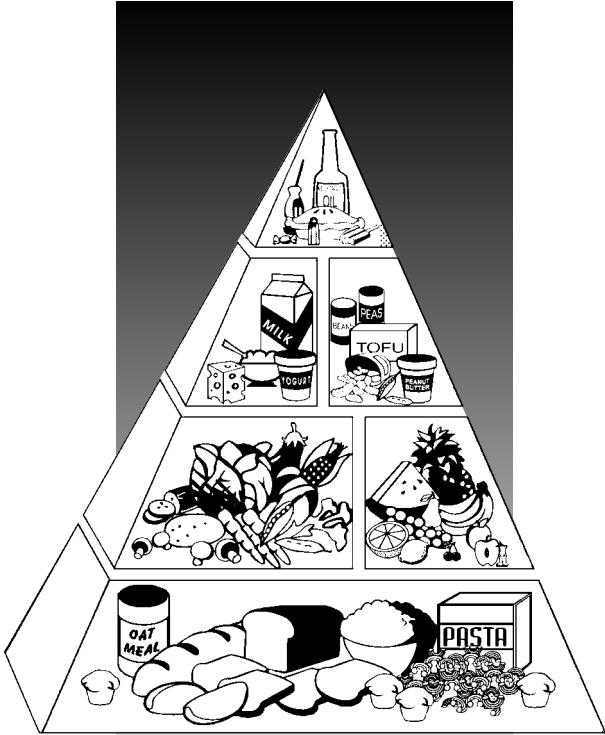
FOR MORE INFORMATION
Call the Consumer Nutrition Hot Line
1-800-366-1655

to talk to a **Registered Dietitian** from the American Dietetic Association for expert advice and help in making the most out of vegetarian eating.



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HEALTHY EATING



the Vegetarian Way

What do vegetarians eat?

All vegetarians have two common practices that they share: **eating a plant based diet and excluding red meat and red meat products**. However, there are variations to the traditional vegetarian diet.

TYPES OF VEGETARIANS AND THE FOODS THEY EAT ▼	PLANT PRODUCTS <i>such as</i> vegetables, fruits, legumes/beans, grains, seeds, nuts, cereal, oatmeal, cream of wheat, tofu	DAIRY PRODUCTS <i>such as</i> milk, cheese, yogurt, ice cream, milkshakes, butter	EGG PRODUCTS <i>such as</i> eggs, custard, pancakes, french toast, some baked products like cake, brownies, muffins	FISH PRODUCTS <i>such as</i> cod, catfish, tuna, salmon, fish sticks, shrimp, lobster, crab legs	POULTRY PRODUCTS <i>such as</i> chicken, turkey, duck, pheasant, chicken pot pie, chicken broth	RED MEAT PRODUCTS <i>such as</i> hamburger, ribs, steak, pork, lamb, hot dogs, brats, venison, bacon, jerkey, meat gravies, gelatin dessert
VEGAN <i>(or strict vegetarian)</i> Eats plant products only						
LACTO Adds dairy products						
LACTO-OVO <i>(most popular type in US)</i> Adds egg products						
PESCO Adds fish products						
SEMI Adds poultry products						

Why choose a vegetarian way of eating?

People choose a vegetarian diet for various reasons:

- **Health Benefits**
A lower risk of heart disease, obesity, stroke, cancer, and diabetes
- **Environmental Advantages**
1.3 billion people could be fed with the grain and soybeans used to raise U.S. livestock.
- **Saving Money**
Meat is always more expensive than plant foods, pound-for-pound.
- **Belief in Non-Violence**
Concern with the cruelty of the slaughtering process
- **Animal Rights**
- **Religious Beliefs**
- **Food Preferences**

Is a vegetarian diet healthy?

Yes, if planned properly. Any way of eating can be harmful if not thought out and carried through with correct choices. Listed here are nutrients to pay special attention to when planning meals and snacks:

Protein

is found in most plant foods as well as in animal foods. Vegetarians *do not* need to combine specific foods within the same meal as the old “complementary protein” theory advised. The body makes its own complete proteins if a variety of plant foods (fruits, vegetables, grains, legumes, nuts, seeds) and enough calories are eaten each day. *Protein is found in dairy and egg products as well, for those vegetarians who choose to eat them.*

Iron

is found in meat as well as in many plant foods such as dried beans and fruits, grains, pumpkin and sesame seeds, and dark green leafy vegetables like spinach. When plant foods rich in iron are eaten with foods high in vitamin C, more iron is absorbed in the body.

Vitamin B12

is found in animal foods such as meat, eggs, and dairy products, but is not found in plant foods. Therefore, vegans (those who eat only plant products) should include B12 *fortified* cereals, soy products, or a vitamin B12 supplement in their diet.

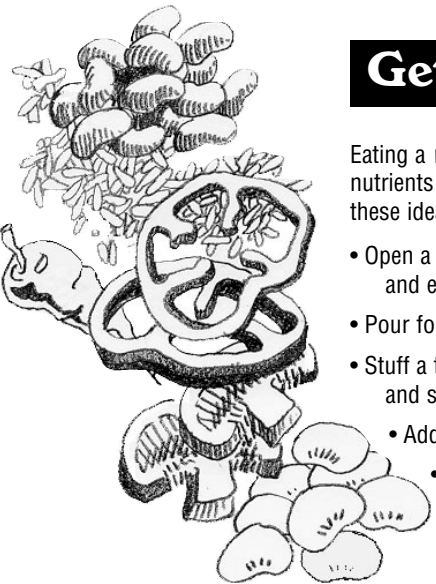
Calcium

is found in dairy products such as milk, cheese, and yogurt and in dark green leafy vegetables such as spinach, collard greens, and kale. Other sources include soy products enriched with calcium such as tofu and soy milk, blackstrap molasses, almonds, and tahini.

Vitamin D

is found in *fortified* dairy and soy products. Very few foods naturally contain vitamin D. However, the body makes vitamin D when the skin is exposed to sunlight. Vegetarians who do not get regular vitamin D in food products or through sun exposure may need to supplement with no more than 10 ug/day. Larger doses can be dangerous.

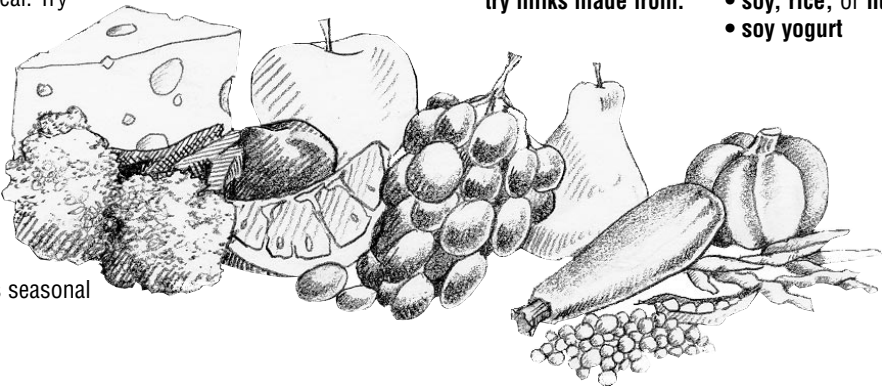
Food Group	Suggested Daily Servings	Serving Sizes
Breads, cereals, rice, and pasta	6 or more	1 slice of bread 1/2 bun, bagel, or English muffin 1/2 cup cooked cereal, rice, or pasta 1 oz. dry cereal
Vegetables	4 or more	1/2 cup cooked beans 4 oz. tofu or tempeh 8 oz. soy milk 2 tbsp. nuts or seeds (these tend to be high in fat, so use sparingly if you are following a low-fat diet)
Fruits	3 or more	1 piece fresh fruit or 1/2 cup canned or cooked fruit 3/4 cup fruit juice
Dairy Products	Optional – up to 3 servings daily	1 cup low-fat or skim milk 1 cup low-fat or nonfat yogurt 1-1/2 oz. low-fat cheese
Eggs	Optional – limit to 3–4 yolks per week	1 egg or 2 egg whites
Fats, sweets, and alcohol	Go easy on these foods and beverages	Oil, margarine, and mayonnaise Cakes, cookies, pies, pastries, and candies Beer, wine, and distilled spirits



Get variety – Mix it up!

Eating a **variety of *planned*** foods assures that the body gets protein and nutrients that it needs. You can easily get variety in the same meal. Try these ideas or create your own:

- Open a can of spicy red beans and pour over rice as a quick and easy main dish.
- Pour fortified soy milk (Vit. B12, Calcium, Vit. D) over cereal.
- Stuff a tortilla with beans, brown rice, and top with cheese and salsa.
 - Add beans and fruit to a salad and make it a meal.
- Write a grocery list for the week’s meals that includes seasonal produce, and save money.



Substitute it!

There are ways to change a recipe that calls for eggs, milk, or meat:

Meat Replacers

Meat “analogs”, or substitutes, are foods made to resemble and taste like meats. They are actually made from plant sources.

Instead of meat, try:



- **tempeh** – cultured soybeans with a chewy texture
- **tofu** – cooked soybeans made into a cheese-like cake. Freezing, then thawing gives it a meaty texture.
- **textured soy protein (TSP)** – compressed soy flour. It is easily prepared, has a texture like ground beef, and is great for chili and sloppy joes. Available at health food stores.



Egg Replacers

1 egg is equal to:

- **1 banana** or
- **2 tablespoons corn starch** or
- **1/4 cup tofu**

Dairy Substitutes

Instead of animal milk, such as cow’s milk, try milks made from:

- **soy, rice, or nuts**
- **soy yogurt**